

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	DODE-00	WHA-00
	EB-00	EUR-00	VC-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	L-00
	VCE-00	AC-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-00	OIG-00	OMB-00
	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	SS-00
	STR-00	TRSE-00	T-00	IIP-00	PMB-00	PRM-00	DRL-00
	G-00	SAS-00	/000W				

-----E7020E 291351Z /80

FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8397
INFO ECOWAS COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
CDR USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ACCRA 000809

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/29/2014

TAGS: [GH](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [TO](#)

SUBJECT: TOGO OPPOSITION LEADER HOPES FOR U.S./CANADA-LED
DIALOGUE

REF: ACCRA 787

Classified By: PolChief Scott Ticknor for reasons 1.5 d and e.

1. (C) Summary: On April 28 evening, PolChief met with Togolese opposition leader Gilchrist Olympio in Accra. PolChief urged the opposition to publicly state a willingness to dialogue, to pursue legal channels of protest, and to publicly urge calm. Olympio did not see much scope for an opposition call for dialogue or for recourse through the legal system, although he said he would consult with colleagues. The military is the only institution that matters in a dialogue with the government. He said he has been urging calm in his media comments. He pressed hard for the United States, alone or together with Canada and possibly the European Union, to invite a dialogue of all the parties. Nigerian President Obasanjo would have to be invited to partQQQ0DM-----

2. (SBU) Olympio said a Radio France correspondent in Togo and some of his own supporters informed him that morning that they had seen 55 bodies in the Lome morgue, reportedly casualties of violence since election day. They also reported indiscriminate shooting in Atakpame, resulting in 60 deaths, and the military's use of helicopter gunships in Aneho, with 20 deaths. He relayed reports of soldiers beating and whipping people and said security forces torched his cousin's house. Polchief noted the USG's concerns about reports of violence.

PolChief Urges Dialogue and an End to Violence

3. (C) Drawing on guidance from the Department, PolChief told Olympio the USG was looking for a public statement from the opposition that it is prepared to enter into a dialogue with the leader of the RPT party in the best interests of Togo and the Togolese people. This does not need to mention a dialogue with the President, PolChief said, but we would like people to know that a process of dialogue is in place.

4. (C) Olympio discounted the relevance of the RPT, saying "the army is the only institution that matters -- everyone else are jokers, including me." He would be willing to dialogue with the military and tried to engage Togolese Minister of Defense General Tidjani in the recent Abuja meeting with Faure Gnassingbe. However, Tidjani responded "you can't finger the army", Obasanjo agreed, and there was no opening to engage the military. Olympio concluded that the army does not really want a dialogue. He said he would have to consult opposition colleagues about issuing a public statement, and would personally support a dialogue, but he thought it would only have meaning for the international community. The Togolese people would see it as "hot air...they don't believe it's possible and won't follow." The opposition believes it won 85 percent of the total vote and is not willing to be a junior partner in a Gnassingbe-led government, he said.

5. (C) PolChief forcefully stressed that the USG is looking to the opposition to make a public statement urging calm and discouraging violence. This would help the situation on the ground and give the opposition more credibility in the international community, he said. He noted that the

opposition has support from the international community which it stands to lose with the kind of statement recently made by opposition candidate Akatani Bob encouraging violence. Olympio said he had been urging calm in his numerous media interviews over the past week but it hasn't had much impact. When pressed about his message, he said he had told the media "violence won't lead anywhere, there needs to be a peaceful solution." He offered that Akatani and senior army officers might consider issuing a joint statement that "they won't kill anymore". However, "the feeling is that after the death toll mounts people will pay attention," he said.

16. (C) PolChief urged the opposition to channel protests through legal channels, not on the streets, adding that violence has not produced positive solutions for Togo in the past. "All our institutions are blocked, where do you want us to go?", Olympio responded. He detailed how CENI and the constitutional court are packed with Gnassingbe supporters.

Looking for U.S. Assistance

17. (C) Olympio wants the U.S., alone or with Canada and possibly the European Union, to invite the government and opposition to a dialogue. Such a meeting should include Obasanjo and possibly some observers. Akatani-Bob "doesn't want a civil war, but he's seeking an international rescue," Olympio said. Olympio would participate in a such a dialogue, and he was certain that Faure would as well. "Faure wants to speak to me," he said, because he wants to draw the opposition into his government. The meeting could take place anywhere - Olympio would travel to Lome if necessary. His ideal outcome is an agreement to hold new elections in 4-6 months and support to reform the electoral institutions.

18. (C) Olympio had strong words to say about France and ECOWAS. He believed that France has been behind the scenes encouraging Francophone African countries not to support the opposition. He saw a French hand influencing ECOWAS' approach to the crisis. According to Olympio, Niger President (and ECOWAS Chair) Tanja was invited to the recent Abuja meeting with Obasanjo but said he couldn't come because of a meeting on the Sahel in Mali, which Olympio thought was a poor excuse. Olympio was frustrated that Tanja's invitation to all the parties to come to Niamey did not give Akatani Bob enough time to attend because he was campaigning in the north. Tanja has never spoken with Olympio. "Totally off the record", Olympio told PolChief that ECOWAS is financially corrupt, with no substance and little financial capability. When asked about the African Union's statement, he thought it was weak. He was critical of the EU's lack of effectiveness in Togo.

19. (C) Ghana has the weight in the region and in ECOWAS to have an impact on the Togo situation, but it has not been helpful to the opposition, Olympio said. He sees Ghana's President Kufuor as too closely linked to the Eyadema family. He recounted a disturbing meeting the previous night, when Ghana's Inspector General of Police and Director of Immigration called on him unannounced at his house. After a round-about discussion, the IGP told Olympio the GOG wanted him to talk less to the media. Olympio responded that he doesn't seek out the media, they look for him. Olympio opined that the Director of Immigration came along because she hoped to intimidate him and look for a way to deport him (not realizing, he said, that Olympio is a dual Togolese-Ghanaian citizen.)

A Local Canadian Perspective

110. (C) On April 29, Canadian High Commissioner Don Bobiash called on the Ambassador to compare notes on Togo. He was clear that he did not have guidance from Ottawa and could not offer a cleared official position, but that his Political Officer had been an election observer and that he had just met with Gilchrist Olympio in the morning. Ambassador said that since Bobiash is accredited to Togo, he should be in touch with Charge Twining.

111. (C) In his meeting with Bobiash today, Olympio had made the same pitch for a U.S./Canadian-led dialogue. Olympio wants a dialogue, but fears that Gnassingbe would use a transitional government to use him and the opposition. Bobiash's view is that the French, ECOWAS, and the Government of Ghana are doing nothing to promote democracy in Togo. Bobiash said ECOWAS Executive Director Chambas called Olympio during their meeting today and Olympio expressed his disappointment with ECOWAS' approach. EU observers in Togo told Canadian PolOff that they saw significant fraud in the election and that they were reporting this to Brussels.

However, Bobiash felt that the EU was reluctant to criticize the Togo election in deference to French leadership in the region. He had no doubt the French were pressuring African states to support Gnassingbe. The key question, Bobiash said, is whether Africans will put pressure on the Gnassingbe regime to compromise. We (the U.S. and Canada) have a special role as credible outsiders and a real opportunity to impact a key moment in the crossroads of history in Togo, according to Bobiash.

Comment

12. (C) Once again, Olympio didn't appear to have a political plan, except to hope that the United States will lead an international dialogue. He could not offer much information about the internal dynamics in the Togolese military, although he harbors hopes of support from Ex-Chief of Staff Bitenewe and ex-Interior Minister Boko. He made no promise that the opposition would issue a public statement about being prepared to enter into a dialogue. He clearly feels some frustration with international efforts to date. He was surprised by PolChief's statement that the opposition has the support of the international community. He noted that ECOWAS Executive Director Chambas had called him earlier this week suggesting a meeting with Fure and Obasanjo on a farm in Nigeria (which Olymio supported) but then he never heard back. As far as he knows, there is no meeting planned (He reiterated this to Bobiash on April 29.) Olympio sees Obasanjo as important to any international effort, but once again complained that the recent Abuja meeting was an Obasanjo "monologue" with very little opportunity for discussion.

13. (C) Olympio's case for U.S./Canadian leadership in a dialogue was much more forceful and purposeful than in our meeting two days ago (reftel). He liked our April 27 press statement. He feels he has a good rapport with the Canadian High Commissioner in Accra and said Canada's Francophone background made it a good partner in an international effort. With the reopening of the border, he expects a number of opposition leaders to come to Ghana in the next day or so for consultations. He received our talking points seriously, taking notes, and said he would discuss them with opposition colleagues.

YATES

NNNN